

2021 Performance Report



*Dedicated to being the greatest
community in Alaska to live, work and play*

STRATEGIC FOCUS



**ECONOMIC
GROWTH AND
DIVERSIFICATION**



**DELIVERING HIGH
QUALITY SERVICES**



**MANAGING
GROWTH**



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Meet the Mayor and Assembly



Edna DeVries
Borough Mayor



Rob Yundt
District 4



Tim Hale
District 1



Mokie Tew
District 5



**Stephanie
Nowers**
District 2



Jesse Sumner
District 6



Dee McKee
District 3



Ron Bernier
District 7



Economic Growth & Diversification

Supporting economic development opportunities and evaluating barriers to growth

2024 Arctic Winter Games

- The Mat-Su Borough (MSB) was awarded the 2024 Arctic Winter Games, a gathering of circumpolar communities competing in over 20 sports, as well as cultural exchanges and presentations.
- Host society established and board members seated; hired general manager for the games in October 2021.
- To date, the Mat-Su Borough has contributed \$250,000 and the State of Alaska has contributed \$1M. Estimated funds needed to raise are approximately \$6M.



An opportunity to share our community with visitors and showcase the Borough's world class recreational facilities and provide a measurable economic impact to local businesses.

West Susitna Access Road Project

The MSB is coordinating with the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) to continue feasibility study efforts for the West Susitna Access Road project towards an application to the governing regulatory agency under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

- The MSB will be conducting additional stakeholder engagement during the first quarter of 2022 per the Assembly's direction provided in December 2021.
- Engineering and field work will be required prior to submitting an application to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process to begin, bringing the project to a Record of Decision by the regulatory agency.
- Continue work to refine engineering and fill data gaps that could impact route alignment and opinion of probable cost.
- AIDEA will utilize \$8.5M of State appropriated funds from the 2021 Legislative session for the purposes of the advancement of predevelopment work.
- MSB is committed to an open and transparent process and is engaging a third party contractor to assist with public involvement and stakeholder engagement.



Economic Growth & Diversification

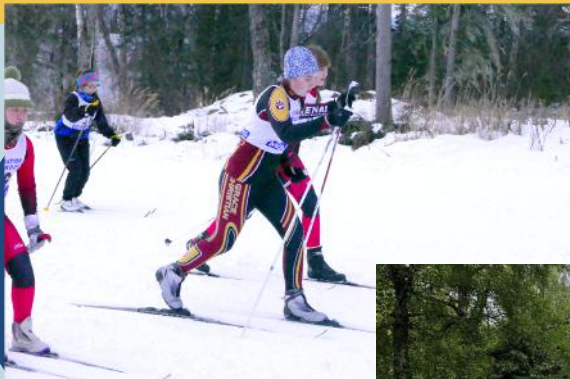
Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project

The MSB, Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), Interior Gas Utility (IGU), and the Alaska Railroad Corporation partnered and submitted a grant to the Economic Development Administration (EDA).

This project would complete three segments of the MSB Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project, allowing for the transportation of liquified natural gas (LNG) via rail. Additionally, the project would expand LNG capacity at the IGU plant in the Point MacKenzie area and improve storage facilities in the Fairbanks area. EDA did not advance the grant however, MSB will continue to look for future grant opportunities.



Supporting the development of Hatcher Pass & tourism opportunities

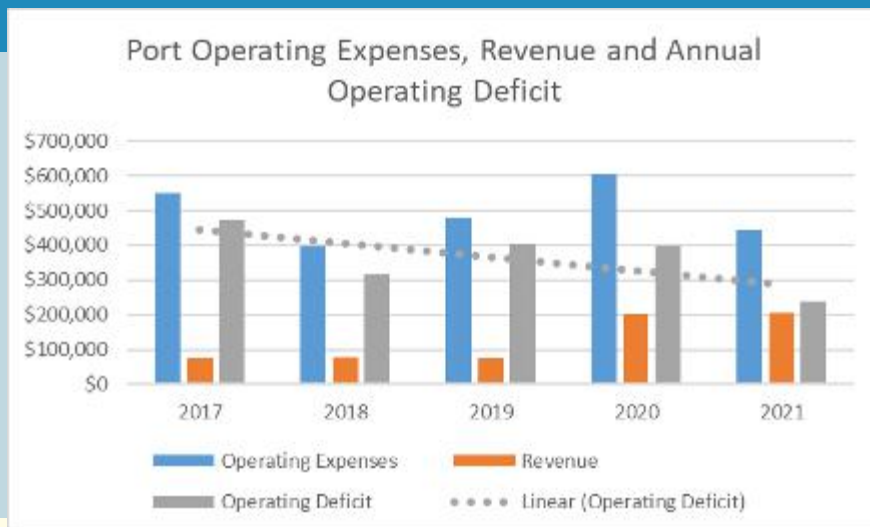


The MSB continues to support ongoing development efforts to Skeetawk and the Hatcher Pass Alpine ski area with a \$100,000 grant.

The MSB also continues to maintain and develop recreational opportunities in the Government Peak Recreational Area (GPRA), where the community enjoys Nordic skiing, fat tire biking, snowshoeing, hiking, mountain biking, and more.



Economic Growth & Diversification



Port MacKenzie

Pursuing break-even on Port operations while developing future prospects

The International Association of Maritime and Port Executives (IAMPE), a not-for-profit industry association that conducts ongoing research regarding port management and development issues, and provides management advisory services, was engaged by the Mat-Su Borough to undertake a Strategic Action Plan for Business Development for Port MacKenzie. Their report was published in November 2021 and provides a market analysis, discusses governance, examines port development scenarios, and provides recommendations for consideration. The report can be found at <https://www.matsugov.us/docs/general/22123/Port-MacKenzie-Buisness-Development-Strategic-Action-Plan-FINAL-REPORT.pdf>. This report was utilized to facilitate a discussion with the Assembly on January 11, 2022 regarding business development efforts.

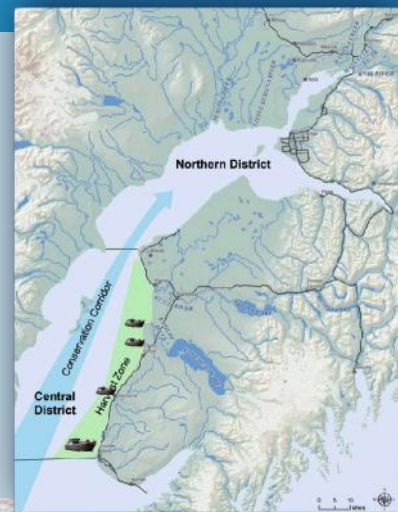


View the port brochure [here](#) or scan the QR code.



King and Silver Salmon are the economic drivers of Mat-Su sport fisheries

In 2014, a 7-0 vote at the Alaska State Board of Fisheries set in motion a sea of change in how the commercial fisheries are managed in Upper Cook Inlet under the Central Drift Gillnet Management Plan. Regulatory teeth were put in place that allow more northern bound fish to pass through a gauntlet of commercial fishing nets, into the Mat-Su Basin, where the shallow braided river channels and sloughs challenge even the toughest of returning salmon.



The goals of Fish & Wildlife Commission



Enhance the Conservation Corridor in the Central District.

Protect fish habitat.

Increase in river returns of Coho salmon to Northern Cook Inlet.

Increase state funding for fish weirs located in the MSB for better in-season management.

Increase state funding for genetic stock analysis of Cook Inlet salmon runs.

Continue advocating at the Board of Fish Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meeting occurring in 2024.

Continue hosting annual fishing season summary meetings between the FWC and ADF&G on important fishery issues.

Continued improvements to the national leading MSB fish passage culvert program.



DELIVER HIGH QUALITY SERVICES



COVID-19 Recovery

REVENUE REPLACEMENT

The American Rescue Plan Funding was used to replace Bed Tax, Talkeetna Sewer and Water Sales Tax, Pool Fees, Ice Arena Fees and Gym rental fees for a total of \$2,447,743.

Since July 1, 2021 we have seen bed tax rise to almost pre-COVID amounts and a significant increase in the Talkeetna Sewer and Water sales tax, although it is still lagging behind pre-COVID numbers. All other tax and fee revenues have remained stable throughout the pandemic. Additionally, there has been a drop in the number of properties entering the initial stage of the foreclosure process.

POOL OPERATIONS

May 2018

Wasilla Pool closes for a one year complete remodel

May 2019

Wasilla Pool reopens
Palmer Pool closes for a complete one year remodel

Spring of 2020

COVID-19 significantly impacts pool operations.

May 2020, the Borough begins to slowly reopen both pools. Usage is reduced significantly to reduce the number of people allowed in the building at one time and most programs and lessons were canceled. Patrons were slow to return however, recent months have shown a steady increase in patronage.



All facilities remained open in 2021

ICE ARENA OPERATIONS

March 2019

Brett Ice Arena closes for 6 months, resulting in no usage.

March 2020

After reopening in September of 2019, COVID closes the doors again.

During the summer of 2021, the Borough began to slowly re-open the ice rink. Usage was greatly reduced with capacity limitations. While patrons were slow to return due to concerns, recent months have shown a growth in participation.



DELIVER HIGH QUALITY SERVICES

Protect Borough operations from State of Alaska variables



School bond debt reimbursement continues to be the single greatest State funding variable for the Borough in developing an economical budget that delivers the services our citizens demand.

The unpredictability of school bond debt reimbursement from the State of Alaska has fluctuated in recent years. New school construction was necessary to address significant population growth in 2011 when voters passed our last school bond. Due to this ballot measure, the Borough’s debt service payments continue through 2035. The Mat-Su Borough continues to impress upon the State the importance of providing a sustainable strategy to address these large swings in revenue and the challenges this unpredictability places on our local government and our ability to provide essential services.

In order to manage the uncertainty during the budget cycle, the Assembly established a reserve fund to help offset these swings in State funding.



Improving communications with our community through online reporting and advancement of e-Commerce

The Mat-Su Borough eCommerce continues to see heavy usage saving time and money for the public and Borough employees.

- Efforts are underway to improve the user interface
- Move online services from the old system to the new
- Become more mobile friendly
- Add additional services to the online system

<https://ecommerce.matsugov.us/>



DELIVER HIGH QUALITY SERVICES



CONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT

- Construction is currently meeting anticipated schedule
- Foundations are complete
- Structure steel is being erected
- Anticipate dry-in structure in February, 2022
- Completion of the academic, administrative, and gymnasium wings to occur in phases between July and December of 2022

Houston High School



JONESVILLE PUBLIC USE AREA

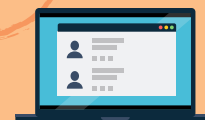
- The Jonesville Public Use Committee, community members, and Borough staff participated in over 30 meetings this past year to continue revising the Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan.
- The plan was approved by the Assembly in December 2021 and has been transmitted to the Department of Natural Resources for their consideration.
- The intent is to develop a public use area that improves public safety while allowing for various outdoor recreational opportunities.

Multiple facilities received improvements and incorporated process changes to create a safe work environment for employees and boards & commissions to provide safe places to serve residents.

A few examples include:



- Service counters with protective barriers
- Expanded use of video teleconferencing
- Increased e-Commerce opportunities for online services



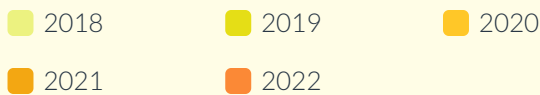
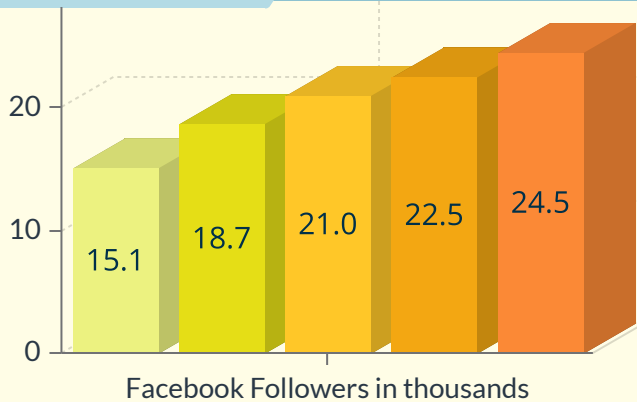


DELIVER HIGH QUALITY SERVICES

Effective communications with the public is key to an effective organization. Keeping the public informed develops trust that will bear fruit with more public involvement. The main MSB webpage (matsugov.us) plays a major role in this and acts as the communications hub for the Borough. Valuable services are provided here, such as: e-commerce, the parcel viewer, land sale info, public meeting schedules, agendas, public notices and the problem reporter application.

FACEBOOK is currently the main social media platform for the borough with 24.5K followers

5 DEPARTMENTS currently use Facebook pages that serve as collectors to the main MSB page.



The use of photos, video and graphic design play a major role in communicating with the public and the media through presentations, social media, the web, and documents such as posters, flyers and booklets.

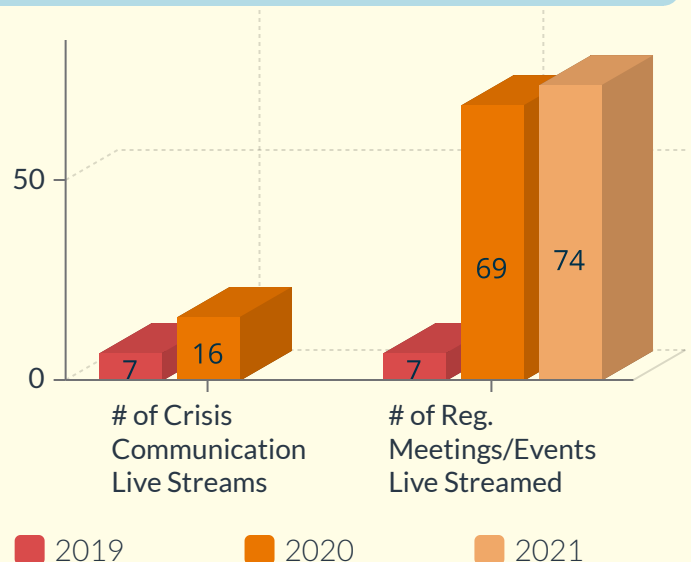


Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) are used to capture project images and more, economically not possible any other way.

The immediacy of the social media platform makes it an essential communication piece for the Borough. MSB Public Affairs has live streamed meetings on Facebook beginning late 2019. Since 2020, all Assembly meetings have been streamed on Facebook and YouTube, with the Planning Commission meetings added in 2021 and the Platting Board coming next in 2022.

22K VIEWERS

Watched the live stream of the two-week long 2020 Alaska Board of Fisheries Upper Cook Inlet Finfish Meeting for the first time.



DELIVER HIGH QUALITY SERVICES

MSB



Problem Reporter

Have a pothole that needs fixing?
See an abandoned vehicle or
pile of trash in the right-of-way?

Problem Reporter App

The roll out of the problem reporter app for road maintenance problems began this spring and provided improved contractor and Borough road crew awareness and response times to issues reported by residents. The previous system of leaving a message on the road hotline requires manual input into our information systems before the contractor is notified. This delays notification when a problem occurs over a weekend. With problem reporter, there is no manual input from Borough employees. Rather, resident reports are distributed directly to the contractor so repairs can begin sooner. In November, Borough staff improved the user interface making it more intuitive and easier to use. A December software update provides data updates every 15 minutes enabling complaint information to move quickly from residents to our road maintenance contractors without employee intervention.

Links to the site are now prominently displayed on the Borough's Public Works and Road Maintenance web pages.



<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/166cb8a69f8441908700860c85bbc6ee?open=menu>

What kind of problems?



**Trash in the
Right of Way**



**Abandoned
Vehicle**



**Road
Maintenance**

Find answers to the Borough's most frequently asked questions about road maintenance, snow removal, abandoned vehicles, and trash in the right-of-way



DELIVER HIGH QUALITY SERVICES

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT

Maintained road miles. This year we added approximately 14 maintained miles putting us back on the trend that has been in place since about 2016.

Maintenance contract cost per mile. This year's increase in cost of living and the related adjustment to contracts erased the downward trend that started in 2015 largely due to increases in the cost of fuel.

New road miles, paved and unpaved, added by developers and certified for maintenance through the subdivision process. The most recent year shows new maintained road miles back near the 2018 highs and at the top of an increasing trend band. Data on new subdivision applications is a leading indicator of future new road mile additions.

RSA funded new pavement miles. This is a volatile data set which saw a 50% reduction in new RSA funded pavement this year. However, the general upward trend since 2015 appears to still be intact with this year's low remaining above the 2015 and 2018 lows. This year's reduction may be related to the planning and design slowdown that occurred at the beginning of COVID-19 restrictions.

Road maintenance cost analysis. Borough staff completed an analysis of our road maintenance services and associated costs. This report is available at:

<https://www.matsugov.us/docs/general/22077/MSB-Road-Maintenance-Services-and-Cost-Analysis.pdf>



TRANSPORTATION 21

Over
45%

Population increase in the past two decades in the Mat-Su Borough

Nov. 2,
2021

Mat-Su Borough voters approve 20 projects in a \$61M transportation infrastructure improvement package

A State Pavement Rehabilitation Grant was approved by the Assembly on December 7, 2021 which provided the first \$8.5M towards the \$61M transportation package

These projects represent important arterial and collector roads and pathway upgrades that contribute to better traffic flow, less congestion and better overall safety across the Borough

Project	Estimated Cost	Project	Estimated Cost
Trunk Road Connector/ Katherine Dr.	2,530,000	Engstrom Rd to Trunk Rd Corridor	2,500,000
Smith Rd Ext Upgrade and Pathway	2,070,000	Edgerton Parks Rd- Mountain Trails Dr Upgrade and Pathway	2,800,000
Old Glenn Pathway Phase 2	1,800,000	Caswell Lakes Rd/Bendapole/ Passthebaite Paving	810,000
49th State Street Pathway	1,000,000	Cheri Lake Dr/Karen Ave/King Arthur Dr	3,500,000
Hemmer Rd Ext South	4,500,000	Hidden Hills Rd & Passthebaite Reconstruction	3,600,000
Lakes Blvd Upgrade	2,500,000	Palmer-Fishhook Separated Pathway	4,500,000
Point MaKenzie Rd Reconstruction MP O-7	8,000,000	Fern St Upgrade & Pathway	4,000,000
Lucille St and Pathway Upgrade	4,900,000	Seward Meridian Phwy Traffic Signal	1,500,000
Tex-Al Dr Ext, Upgrade and Pathway	6,325,000	MSB School District Pedestrian Projects	2,300,000
MSB School District Shaw Elementary Turn Lane	500,000	Multi-Modal Wasilla Depot	1,500,000



SERVICE STATISTICS



The Mat-Su Borough Finance Department continues to receive annual awards from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The GFOA has awarded the Mat-Su Borough with its **Triple Crown Medallion** in recognition that the Mat-Su Borough has achieved all three GFOA Financial awards for 2021. These awards are a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award, the Popular Annual Financial Report Award, and the distinguished Budget Presentation Award.



Animal Care

2,628 animals processed in 2020 by Animal Care

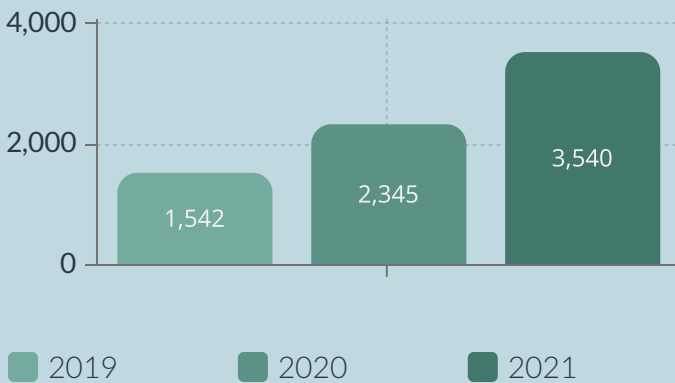
100 people volunteer on average at the shelter and foster care

2,906 animals processed in 2021 in the first 11 months, nearly an 11% increase

1,200 hours of service is provided per month by our volunteers

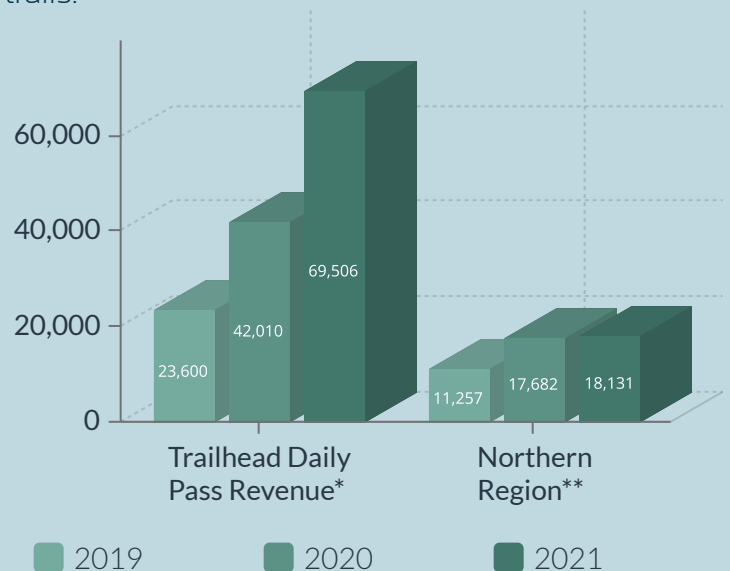
Campgrounds & Trails

Number of Passes



The biggest success of our Trails and Camping Program was the increase in the number of Annual Trail Passes sold. From 2019-2021 we experienced over a 300% increase in the revenue generated from Annual Passes. Two electronic pay kiosks were installed that also reduced the amount of time needed to process money collected.

The number of trail users estimated by trail user day pass revenue has increased significantly. Despite the drop in tourists, trail usage grew as many local residents increased their use of the trails.



*Includes Core Area sites including: Jim Creek Trailhead, West Butte, Government Peak Recreation Area, Lazy Mountain Trailhead, Pioneer Peak Trailhead, Crevasse Moraine Trailhead, Big Lake Boat Launch, Big Lake Boat Launch Parking, Ayrshire Road Trailhead

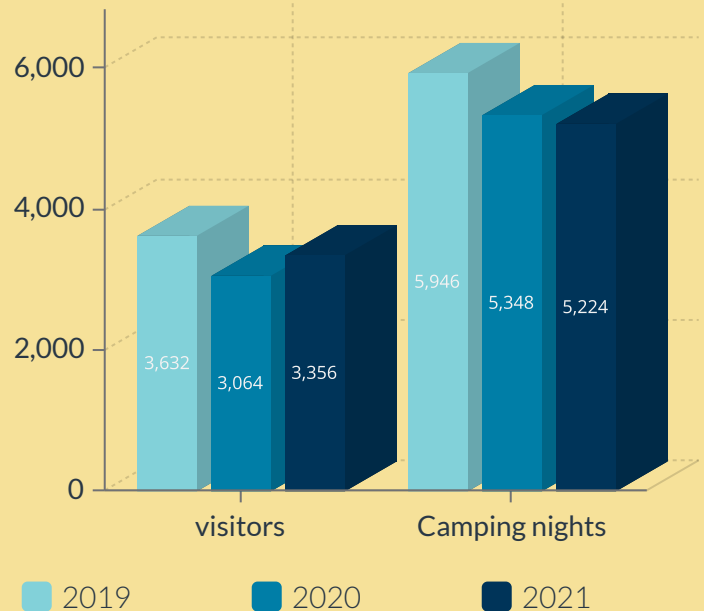
**Includes Chase Trailhead, Talkeetna Lakes Parking and Whigmi Road Parking

SERVICE STATISTICS

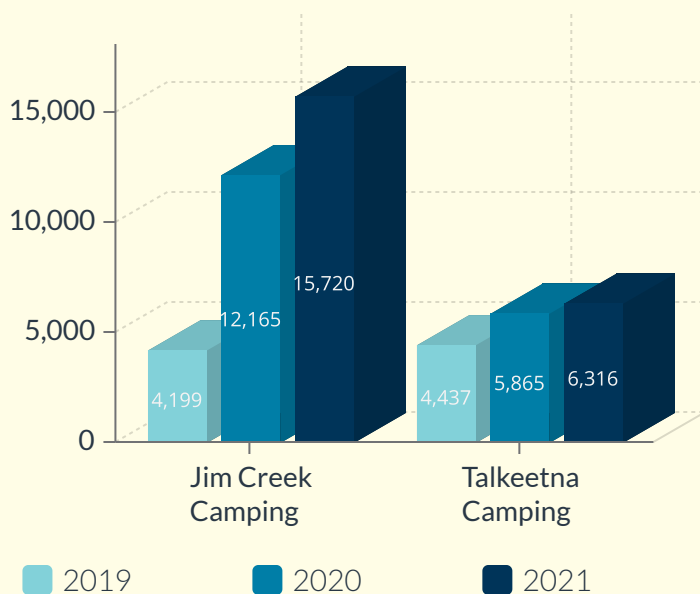


Campgrounds & Trails

Pre-Covid in the summer of 2019, the Matanuska Park Campground had set another record in terms of visitors, number of countries who camped and revenue generated. The summer of 2020 saw a 15% drop in visitors and a significant drop in the number of countries that visited the park with 23 countries in 2019, dropping to 4 in 2020. In 2021, the campground rebounded to within 2% of the pre-Covid numbers in terms of attendance. We found that people were staying fewer nights than pre-Covid and traveling from place to place rather than staying for extended periods of time.



Camping Revenue



Similarly, the numbers jumped up over 300% at the Jim Creek Campground. The Borough Campground in Talkeetna saw a 40% increase from 2019-2021.

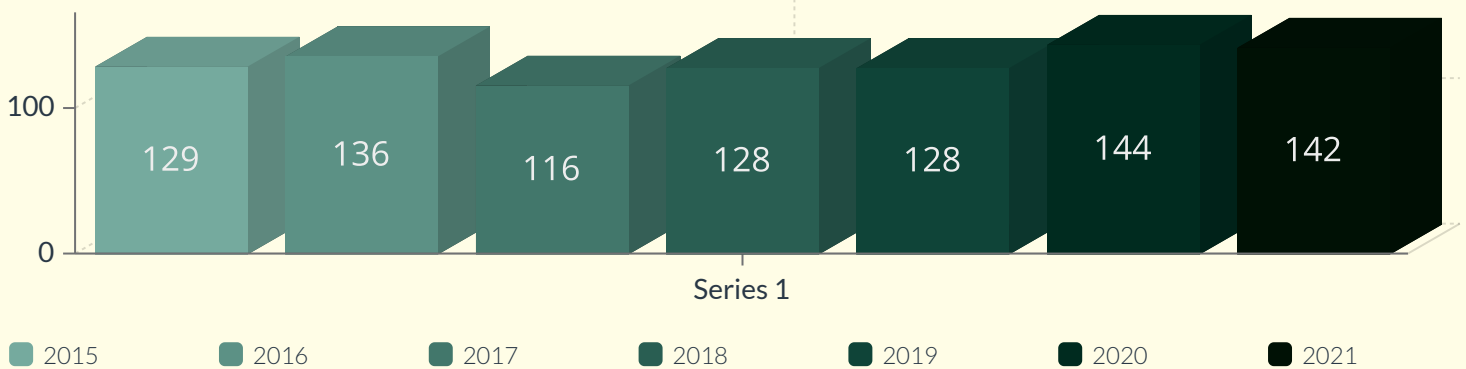


Managing Growth

According to the US Census, between 2010 and 2020 the population of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough consistently increased, with Mat-Su accounting for 78% of the statewide population growth

Subdivisions created over the years

Platting trends in terms of subdivision approvals compared to recent years



Commercial & Residential Construction Values

	No. of Units	Value	No. of Units	Value
	Residential		Non-Residential	
2008	1,224	233,957,300	97	31,039,000
2009	775	114,754,139	36	45,761,861
2010	547	86,668,220	37	19,010,480
2011	328	55,930,941	25	20,802,400
2012	447	80,165,700	70	33,097,400
2013	433	84,882,500	74	26,028,308
2014	475	99,735,100	101	39,675,000
2015	590	123,732,800	211	99,256,100
2016	542	120,329,500	252	104,608,300
2017	533	112,393,300	250	89,565,700
2018	629	124,037,900	235	79,831,600
2019	547	103,283,600	142	99,825,710
2020	658	119,446,000	148	73,036,950
2021	616	119,334,100	97	51,163,528



Managing Growth

Pursuing Wildland Fire Risk Reduction ● Public Education and Awareness

READY ready.matsugov.us

Sharing preparedness information in one location for year round reference at our all-encompassing READY site.

FIREWISE

Communities can work with Emergency Management to develop *Community Wildfire Protection Plans* (CWPPs). Learn about FIREWISE and request a home visit to receive a Fire Risk Rating.

DES Department of Emergency Services

Completed a campaign to educate community councils on the FIREWISE program and encourage each community to adopt a CWPP.

DES will continue to provide support to those communities that want to develop their own CWPP. DES also responded to 50 FIREWISE surveys of private property this past summer at each property owner's request. Staff continue to look for potential grant opportunities to enable property owners to FIREWISE, to create defensible spaces on their property.

FUEL RISK REDUCTION

The Mat-Su Borough's Community Development Department continues to perform fuel reduction maintenance on various parks across the core area. Cutting of beetle-kill spruce on Borough lands adjacent to a private property is also allowable by the adjacent property owner(s). The Assembly also recently approved code changes to exempt dead and dying timber from the five-year timber harvest schedule, provide for over the counter sales, and remove the fair market value determination in an effort to assist in fuel risk reduction.



Beetle-Kill Spruce Brush Collection Program

The Central Landfill and Big Lake, Sunshine, and Willow transfer stations continue to support beetle-kill spruce brush collection at no charge to the public. The program has served 16,530 residential customers and collected 5,491 tons of brush over the last five years.



Managing Growth



Promote completing key road arterials



The Borough continues to support the development of key arterial roads owned by the State Department of Transportation. State projects are underway for Knik-Goose Bay Road, the Parks Highway, and Seward-Meridian Parkway in the Borough core area. The Parks Highway work has been continuing for years and construction should begin for Knik-Goose Bay Road and Seward-Meridian Highway in the 2022-2023 timeframe.

Ensure effective and efficient code compliance

Efforts have been concentrated in prevention through education, detection, and enforcement of MSB code. In 2019, the MSB Assembly approved a fourth Code Compliance Officer and the statistics support that decision. The number of open cases have decreased while the closed cases have increased.

550 approximate calls received in 2021 related to open cases.

200 citations issued during 2021.

497 new cases opened in 2021 (419 cases closed out).

707 active cases, down from its peak of 800 cases

Solid Waste Community Clean-up (Fiscal Year 2021 Year through December 2021)

- o 94 clean ups
- o 59 tons of material collected
- o Removed 96 abandoned vehicles from public right-of-way

Solid Waste Community Clean-up program Fiscal Year 2020

- o 119 Clean ups
- o 71 tons of material collected
- o Removed 90 abandoned vehicles from public right-of-way



Managing Growth

Aligning emergency services resources to meet increasing demands for emergency services

Preparedness

With the recently occupied emergency operations center (EOC), the Borough now has a specific, secured and resilient operational base for emergency planning, coordination and situational awareness. Rotating position specific training and quarterly exercises are ongoing to work through potential disasters and responses. Preparedness with our communications infrastructure has also been on the forefront with the construction of two new radio towers and improvements to our alerting and communications platforms for the public and first responders.

- 1
- READY
- 2
- SET
- 3
- GO

Mat-Su Borough staff have created a new public emergency information application to serve as a single source for public information during an emergency event. The public can click on the map or type in their address to see if their area has been designated for 'Ready – prepare to evacuate,' 'Set – set to evacuate at a moment's notice,' or 'Go – leave immediately.' This provides a graphic user interface showing the distance away from event data such as evacuation areas, secured roads, and detours.



Crisis communications has evolved in the last 3 years where hub web pages and story maps are now used as an interactive virtual space where the public can go for the latest information. Social media is used to drive the public and media to these hubs during and after the crisis as it moves into the recovery phase.

Due to continued population growth, corresponding growth of residential and commercial development, and COVID-19, the Mat-Su Borough is experiencing significant increases in EMS and fire response demand. Run volume has steadily increased. As the Mat-Su Borough becomes more of a hub for recreation for Southcentral Alaska, both the number and complexity of rescue related calls has also increased.





Managing Growth



Emergency services capital improvements

The Borough continues to modernize infrastructure such as recent improvements to fire stations 6-1 and the Central Mat-Su Fire training center at 6-2. The Assembly, this past year, approved the construction of station 3-9, a joint fire/rescue/EMS/telecom facility to better serve the Palmer and east side of the Borough including Hatcher Pass and the Fishhook community, Butte, and Lazy Mountain. Other capital improvements include replacing and modernizing rescue tools purchased in the 1980s and 1990s, many of which were beyond their useful life in addition to new apparatus that are over 30 years old.

Establishing a Municipal Planning Organization

The MSB has grown by nearly 50% over the past 20 years. The core area population has swelled to over 80,000 people, with Fishhook, North Lakes, and Knik-Fairview exceeding 2035 growth projections. Based on US Census data, it is expected that some portion of the core area will be designated as “urbanized” in 2022. An urbanized designation means the MSB has 50,000 people or more in a contiguous area with a population density of over 1,000 people per square mile.

- The Federal Highway Act of 1962 stipulates that all Urbanized Areas must have a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to carry out a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process. Once the designation occurs, the MSB and our partners will have one year to form an MPO.
- In anticipation of the designation, MSB staff, the Cities of Palmer and Wasilla, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, Valley Transit, Mat-Su Health Foundation, Mat-Su Trails Foundation, Knik Tribe and Chickaloon Native Village have been meeting monthly to discuss transportation planning in the core area. In September of 2021, a ten-member Pre-MPO Policy Board was created to recommend policy decisions about how an MPO might be structured and how it might operate.
- The pre-MPO Policy board approved an ambitious timeline to complete all the documentation required for an Operating Agreement. The package is anticipated to be submitted to the Governor's office in September 2022. If the Governor accepts the Operating Agreement and forms a Mat-Su MPO, the MPO will be operating in good standing with the Federal government and have the opportunity to accept and direct more than \$8 million annually toward priority transportation projects. We are projecting the MPO to be established by March 2023.



Managing Growth

SOLID WASTE

77,000 Tons of waste per year collected by the Solid Waste Division

55,000 Tons of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)

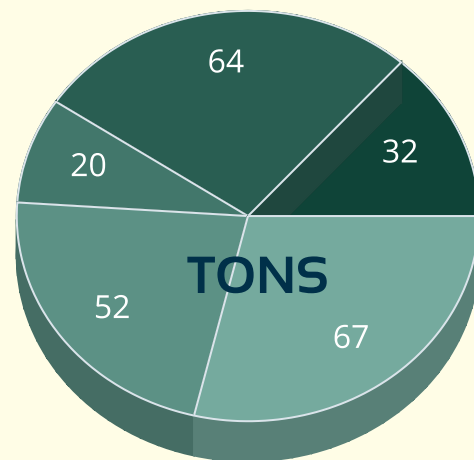
15,000 Tons of Construction and Demolition waste (C&D)

The MSB Solid Waste Division diverts recyclable waste from the landfill to save expensive lined cell space for refuse. This lengthens the useful life of landfill cells and reduces future development costs.

Recycling efforts in 2021 have diverted 234 tons of recycling material, 2,167 tons of brush and 1,900 tons of scrap metal from the landfill. This is an increase from the previous year diversion of 184 tons of recycling material and 2,156 tons of brush while scrap metal was about the same. In 2022, Alaska Waste will be examining establishing a new recycling facility to support a curbside recyclable collection program. Should this program come to fruition, it would likely increase recycling volumes in the Borough and reduce waste flows into the lined landfill cells.

2021 RECYCLING TONNAGE

- Big Lake 29%
- Central Landfill 22%
- Sutton 8%
- Talkeetna 27%
- Willow 13%



Central Landfill completed a new Landfill Development plan in 2020. The new plan implements a more efficient land use corridor design. This design better utilizes water table measurements, future gas collection requirements, water runoff and future air quality standards, and meets all current regulatory requirements.



Opening and closing landfill cells requires costly engineering, design, and construction.

\$10 million Approximate cost to construct and close a landfill cell

Develop long term, cost effective solution for septage and leachate



Two main sewage issues exist:

As the Borough population and number of homes and businesses outside the cities continue to increase, so do the number of septic tanks and potential for sewage to contaminate the drinking water table.

As the quantity of pumped sewage grows, so does the potential to overtax the Anchorage Wastewater Utility system and being asked to find another location for the sewage currently being trucked from the MSB.

Possible solutions:

In early 2021, the Mat-Su Borough approached the City of Palmer regarding the potential for modifying their existing system to accept trucked sewage from areas of the Borough outside city sewer systems. CRW Engineering is developing a feasibility study of the City of Palmer system. The study will include financial analysis of tipping fees vs. capital improvements and the cost of operations and maintenance. Once available, the study will be reviewed to determine a path forward.

Leachate facility update

THE ISSUE: Leachate - water runoff from landfill cells

2.5 to 3 million gallons of leachate is generated by the Central Landfill annually

As the landfill waste volume increases and new cells are built and filled with waste, the volume of leachate produced will continue to increase. Through a recent study, three feasible options were developed. Each of these options are to be supplemented by leachate recirculation which overall will reduce the volume of leachate requiring treatment by approximately 45% or more.

3 options:

Transporting leachate to Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU)

Transporting leachate to AWWU is the most expensive option over the long term and leaves the Borough vulnerable to future rule changes that may prohibit or make very costly industrial waste disposal at AWWU.

High Pressure Filtration: In response to this problem, a design of a high pressure filtration option in conjunction with septage treatment was explored. As this process developed, it was modified to separate septage and leachate treatment streams because mixing leachate, an industrial waste water, and septage, a domestic wastewater would greatly increase the cost of treating the much larger volume of septage. Following design review, it was determined that the water filtration method was not an acceptable process to treat leachate in Alaska leaving the evaporation method the only acceptable and suitable option.

Evaporation is a process already used by numerous landfills throughout the nation and already approved and used at landfills in Alaska. A 20-year life cycle cost analysis was recently completed for build and design of a leachate evaporation system that could manage the volume of leachate produced at the Borough central landfill. The estimated project budget is \$5,400,000 and the Mat-Su Borough is exploring options for funding this alternative.



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Matanuska-Susitna Borough 2021 Performance Report

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